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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Agricultural Adjustment Agency
Washington, D. C.

March 15, 1945

GOOD PEANUT SEED

Suggested script for broadcast by member of Triple-A or Extension Service with Radio Farm Director or announcer -- or as an interview between two members of either farm agency.

- ANNOUNCER(B): Farmers who grow peanuts should be interested in improving their yields. Not only because higher yields mean a better financial return -- but because the Nation needs more peanuts for war. An energy-giving food, peanuts are an important item on the military diet. And today, Mr. (A)_____, (Title)_____, will discuss one of the phases of peanut cultivation through which farmers can insure better yields. And what part of peanut cultivation do you have on your mind today, A_____?
- A: Peanut seed, B_____. Good peanut seed.
- B: Well, if you're going to think about peanut seed, it might just as well be good seed. There's not much point in our sitting around here thinking about bad seed.
- A: Nor is there much point in the farmer planting bad seed.... peanut seed from low-yielding strains, or shrivelled, undeveloped seed. He's just putting himself in a position to waste a good part of his time, hard work and money if he does.
- B: But, A_____, a farmer wouldn't think of using bad seed. Why, he wouldn't use mongrel mubbins for seed corn -- or cull potatoes to start a crop. He knows it doesn't pay.
- A: True enough, B_____. But peanuts have more or less lagged behind the other crops in supplies of good seed. There's no commercial "certified" peanut seed industry on a national scale.
- B: That's not so good. Particularly when peanuts are the third most important cash crop in the South. But, if there's no certified seed, how do peanut growers get high quality seed?
- A: Well, some growers have worked pretty hard to produce high grade, heavy yielding crops of seed peanuts. They have worked with the peanut shellers and handlers to make the good quality seeds available to anyone who wants them.
- B: That sounds like pretty fine cooperation to me.

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A: It is, B _____. And it's from these better seed stocks that we hope to grow more peanuts per acre this year.

B: What kind of peanut seed would you recommend, A _____, to get the best results?

A: That depends on many things, B _____. The soil, the climate, and other conditions under which they're grown determine the best variety of peanut for each section of the country. The best thing for a farmer to do, if he doesn't have seed of his own that he's sure of, would be to consult his county agent. Find out the best variety of peanut for his soil and climate, as well as for the needs of his market. Then get the best No. One seed of the recommended variety that he can find.

B: That's the way to make sure his peanut crop will be a paying proposition.

A: That's one of the best ways. Actual experiments in Georgia have shown that No. One seed yielded three hundred pounds more shelled peanuts an acre than "peg" seed — And that's about thirty dollars an acre more on the crop.

B: And that's not "hay" in any man's language.

A: No, B _____. That's peanuts — More peanuts to feed our fighting men — to give them the nourishing food they must have to do their job.

B: I led right into that one, all right. But to go back from fighting men to dollars, isn't it more profitable to use shelled peanut seed?

A: It certainly is. The shelled peanut seed comes in direct contact with the soil itself, and has a chance to sprout more quickly and uniformly. That way you get a better stand — a better yield. But the shelling must be done carefully to avoid breaking the skins, because that seriously affects germination.

B: I've even heard it recommended that shelling be done by hand.

A: That's the best way, all right. But sometimes the amount of labor involved prohibits hand shelling. You can get satisfactory planting seed shelled by machine, if it is carefully done in a properly adjusted machine of a suitable type. Then, after shelling, the seed should be hand picked to take out all the damaged or shrivelled kernels.

B: Well, A _____, when is the best time to shell peanut seed?

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A: Oh you can shell it any time during the winter months. But the seed should be treated as soon as convenient after shelling.

B: What do you mean, "treated"?

A: I mean treated with suitable chemicals to protect the seed against rot. That helps you get a more uniform stand and a better yield. And it's particularly important to treat seed that has been shelled by machine.

B: Why is that true?

A: Because seed that has been shelled by machine is much more likely to have the seed-coats damaged, as well as other injuries. And injured seed is more subject to rot. But even hand-shelled seed is usually improved by treatment.

B: Is this treating process very hard to do?

A: Not at all. You just coat the seed thoroughly with the chemical dust, at the rate of two to three ounces of dust for every hundred pounds of seed. You can find out the best kind of chemical and proper proportions from your county agent.

You can use a barrel, box or oil-drum as a home-made rotary mixer -- or you can even use a canvas or heavy cloth and roll the seed and dust together. Just be sure the mixing is done slowly to avoid skinning the seed. Or, if you prefer, you can have the seed treated at the shelling plant before you bring it to your farm.

B: Are poisonous chemicals used in this treatment?

A: Some of them are poisonous. So every precaution should be taken in handling the dust and the treated seed. Do not breathe the dust. Keep it out of your eyes. You should keep treated seed away from children and livestock -- and use the treated seed for planting purposes only. If you have any left over, it should be destroyed. But you can store the seed safely enough if you keep it well ventilated in loosely woven sacks and in a dry place.

B: How about the expense of this process? Does it run very high?

A: Not at all. The cost runs not more than fifteen to twenty-five cents for every hundred pounds of seed. And actual field records show that it's pretty cheap insurance for good yields.

B: Well, tell me, A_____, are these chemicals very hard to get now?

- A: They're still available, but it's pretty important to get your orders in early. Transportation facilities are uncertain these days at best, and deliveries might be a bottle neck if farmers waited until the last minute to place their orders. So the sooner you let your dealer know what you want, the better.
- B: And the better the seed, the shelling, the treatment - the better the crop.
- A: Right! And the better the crop, the more food for our men in uniform and the civilian workers here at home.